



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 15 October 2007

Current Nationwide



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- *The Associated Press* reports that Penn State University experienced a minor leak of 'slightly radioactive water' at its Breazeale nuclear reactor. However, the incident did not pose any health risk to workers, the community or the environment, according to the university. (See item [5](#))
- *The New York Times* reports that a 14-year-old boy was arrested in a northern suburb of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for plotting a "Columbine style" attack on students. Police found a 9-millimeter assault rifle, dozens of authentic-looking BB and air guns, and seven homemade hand grenades at the boy's home. The student was charged with various offenses including criminal attempt and possession of a criminal instrument. (See item [24](#))

DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report *Fast Jump*

Production Industries: [Energy; Chemical; Nuclear Reactors, Materials and Waste; Defense Industrial Base; Dams](#)

Service Industries: [Banking and Finance; Transportation and Border Security; Postal and Shipping; Information Technology; Communications; Commercial Facilities](#)

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: Physical: ELEVATED, Cyber: ELEVATED

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *October 12, Platts* – (Texas) **Swift Energy closes on \$249 million purchase of Texas properties.** U.S. independent producer Swift Energy Friday said it had closed on its \$249.5 million purchase of south Texas oil and gas properties from privately held Escondido Resources. The properties, which comprise 82,900 acres in La Salle, Dimmit and Webb counties, produced about 21,000 Mcf-equivalent/d in the second quarter of 2007. Roughly 85% of the production was natural gas and natural gas liquids, the company added. Houston-based

Swift said it expects the acquisition will increase its production in the fourth quarter by 1.3 to 1.5 Bcfe.

Source:

<http://www.platts.com/Natural%20Gas/News/8296384.xml?sub=Natural%20Gas&p=Natural%20Gas/News&?undefined&undefined>

2. *October 12, Space.com* – (District of Columbia) **Pentagon Report: Let's put solar power collectors in orbit.** A Pentagon-chartered report urges the United States to take the lead in developing space platforms capable of capturing sunlight and beaming electrical power to Earth. Space-based solar power, according to the report, has the potential to help the United States stave off climate change and avoid future conflicts over oil by harnessing the Sun's power to provide an essentially inexhaustible supply of clean energy. The report, "Space-Based Solar Power as an Opportunity for Strategic Security," was undertaken by the Pentagon's National Security Space Office this spring as a collaborative effort that relied heavily on Internet discussions by more than 170 scientific, legal, and business experts around the world.

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,301479,00.html>

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Chemical Industry

3. *October 11, Charleston Daily Mail* – (West Virginia) **Explosion rocks local chemical plant.** Employees of a Charleston chemical plant were evacuated after a dust explosion. No injuries were reported. Firefighters responded Thursday to the incident at Elementis Specialties Chemicals. "They had a little bit of a fire and a small explosion in their baghouse," said the assistant Chief of the Charleston Fire Department. McClure said that the fire is believed to have been caused by a fan motor that overheated. The company is still investigating the incident. "We've stabilized the incident, but we don't know the exact cause," said the VP of Elementis. At the plant, Elementis combines clay and beef tallow, a derivative of animal fat, to make chemicals and organoclays. Those are used to make ink, paint, coatings and cosmetics. The baghouse is like a filter, used to separate ingredients used in the plant's products. Elementis had a similar fire in November 2002 that involved the baghouse area. That fire was caused by a design flaw that has since been corrected.

Source: <http://www.dailymail.com/story/News/2007101178/Explosion-rocks-local-chemical-plant/>

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Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste

4. *October 12, Washington Post* – (Maryland) **Nuclear plant critics fret over bridge.** Opponents of a proposed third nuclear reactor in Calvert County are drawing attention to a concern that might sound familiar to Calvert's frustrated commuters: how to get off the southern tip of the peninsula-shaped county. Primarily at issue is the crowded, two-lane Thomas Johnson Memorial Bridge and whether it could accommodate the thousands of motorists, who might flee in the event of a nuclear catastrophe. An estimated 27,000 vehicles cross the bridge each

day, drawn in large part by the jobs magnet of the Patuxent River Naval Air Station in St. Mary's County. The Maryland State Highway Administration, which ranks the area around the bridge as "failing" during rush hour, is studying whether to build a wider bridge, but a new structure is at least six years away by the most optimistic predictions. Critics are concerned about having to flee Calvert in the event of a meltdown or terrorist strike in Lusby, where the proposed reactor would be built next to the two-reactor Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant. Officials with the county and Constellation Energy, operator of the Calvert Cliffs plant, said yesterday that the current evacuation plan is safe and that the chance of a meltdown is remote. Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/10/11/AR2007101102382.html>

5. *October 11, Associated Press* – (Pennsylvania) **Penn State reports 'minor leak of slightly radioactive water.'** Penn State University has reported a minor leak of 'slightly radioactive water' at its Breazeale nuclear reactor. The leak occurred in the pool in which the reactor sits, but the water posed no health risk to workers, the community or the environment, the university said Thursday. The reactor will be out of service until the leak is found, the university said. Reactor staff noticed "a small reduction of several hundred gallons over the past several days" from the pool that holds 71,000 gallons of water, according to Penn State. The leak rate is about 10 gallons per hour. The pool shields the core's radiation and cools the reactor. It is comprised of tap water with most of its minerals and impurities removed. Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,301297,00.html>

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

6. *October 12, Associated Press* – (National) **Alcoa awarded fighter jet parts deal.** Aluminum maker Alcoa Inc. has been awarded a \$360 million contract by the defense contractor Lockheed Martin Corp. to supply parts for new stealth fighter jets that will replace aging military planes. Alcoa's forged and cast products division in Cleveland will produce alloy aluminum die forgings for the F-35 Lightning II fighter jet, also known as the Joint Strike Fighter, over the next 10 years, the company said. The U.S. plans to use the F-35 to replace older planes used by the Marines, Air Force and Navy, including F-16, F-18 and Harrier jets. The F-35 is among the most expensive Pentagon spending programs, costing a total of \$275 billion. The contract includes the design and manufacture of large aluminum structural die forgings for more than 1,200 aircraft. The forgings consist of 15 large wing- and engine-supporting bulkheads and six wing-box parts per plane. Lockheed Martin expects to build more than 4,000 of the aircraft for the United States and international forces, Alcoa said. Source: http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20071012/ap_on_bi_ge/alcoa_contract_2
7. *October 12, Associated Press* – (National) **Lockheed Martin signs \$1.24 million contract to help improve Navy situation awareness.** Military contractor Lockheed Martin Corp. said Friday it was awarded a \$1.24 million contract from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. The contract is the third phase of a program that enables the U.S. Navy to improve situation awareness in maritime operations. Lockheed Martin will provide software upgrades to the program, called Fast Connectivity for Coalitions and Agents Program, and install the operations at several U.S. Navy commands as part of the deal.

Source: http://biz.yahoo.com/ap/071012/lockheed_martin_contract.html?.v=1

8. *October 11, Washington Business Journal* – (National) **Lockheed Martin wins \$4.9M contract.** Lockheed Martin Corp. has won an 18-month \$4.9 million contract from the Department of Defense to create sensors that can relay pictures to defense analysts. The aim is to increase homeland security. Under the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, the Bethesda-based government contractor is charged with developing a system that will shave off more than 1,300 hours of a defense analyst's time. The system is called Object Recognition via Brain-Inspired Technology (ORBIT). The idea is to take sensor data and create three-dimensional models of landscapes so analysts can more quickly recognize ordinary objects such as mailboxes and dumpsters. That will allow them to gauge whether explosive devices have been planted near them.

Source: <http://biz.yahoo.com/bizj/071011/1533342.html?.v=1>

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Banking and Finance Sector

9. *October 11, Arizona Daily Star* – (Arizona) **BBB warns of Medicare phone scam.** Tucson and Southern Arizona Better Business Bureau officials warned residents about fraudsters, who call senior citizens and offer fake Medicare cards in an attempt to obtain their personal information, such as bank account numbers. The bureau stated it received reports from seniors, who said they were contacted by the "U.S. Medical Office," in regard to their Medicare coverage. In their reports, the victims specified that the scammers put pressures on them by claiming that if they did not purchase the new cards, Medicare will not cover their bills anymore.

Source: <http://www.azstarnet.com/allheadlines/205854>

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Transportation and Border Security Sector

10. *October 12, San Francisco Chronicle* – (National) **Technology for paperless boarding passes adopted.** The International Air Transport Association announced that passengers are one step closer to paperless boarding passes. The group, which represents 240 airlines, said that boarding passes might soon become just a digital bar code travelers receive on their cell phone via email. The system is already being tested by Air Canada, but in the U.S., although popular among U.S. carriers, its implementation must be approved by the Transportation Security Administration. The paperless option is more problematic in the U.S. because authorities push for photo IDs and boarding passes. However, the association claims that the new process would save more than \$500 million annually. Other carriers using the system include ANA in Japan, Air Berlin in Germany and Spanair in Spain.

Source: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2007/10/12/BUL7SOJSJ.DTL&type=business>

11. *October 11, Associated Press* – (National) **Air traffic control meltdown creates concern.** Members of Congress are investigating whether the Memphis airport communications failure

last month was an isolated incident or if there is a flaw in the system's design. The telecommunications systems at air-control centers and other Federal Aviation Association (FAA) installations across the country were recently updated according to a \$2.4 billion project. Some believe that the new network, dubbed the FAA Telecommunications Infrastructure project (FTI), lacks sufficient backups. "The Memphis breakdown was the latest in a string of similar but less serious failures of the upgraded system at other air-control centers," said the vice president of the union representing FAA technicians. "It's engineered this way, and it's going to happen again," he said.

Source: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21253618/>

12. *October 11, Reuters* – (National) **U.S. plans Oct meeting of airlines on delays-sources.** The White House will meet with airline executives on October 23 and 24 to discuss scheduling to reduce delays and congestion at New York area airports. The U.S. Justice Department will oversee the proceedings to make sure that no antitrust rules are violated. If the parties do not reach an agreement, the Federal Aviation Association "could cap flights at either airport." Moreover, in December, the Transportation secretary will submit her recommendations, which might include forced schedule cuts.

Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/governmentFilingsNews/idUSN1144287420071011>

13. *October 11, PR Newswire* – (National) **First train in U.S. with new braking system operates over Norfolk Southern.** On Thursday, Norfolk Southern Corporation operated the first revenue service train in the United States equipped exclusively with electronically controlled pneumatic (ECP) brakes. The ECP brakes enable the train to reduce stopping distances by up to 60 percent over conventional air brake systems. The company plans to equip 30 locomotives, 210 quick-drop coal hoppers and 230 hybrid gondolas with ECP brakes for use in dedicated coal train service.

Source: <http://money.cnn.com/news/newsfeeds/articles/prnewswire/NETH07311102007-1.htm>

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Postal and Shipping Sector

14. *October 12, The Post-Journal* – (New York) **A scare at the post office.** Thursday night, a suspicious briefcase in the post office in Jamestown, New York closed parts of the city. According to the Jamestown Police Department, the briefcase "looked out of place and nobody came back to claim the package...Based on what we saw and where it was placed, it was in a suspicious location where it would be highly unlikely that someone would just forget it." After investigating for more than four hours with the help of a bomb squad unit from the Sheriff's Department, police determined the briefcase was not a threat and reopened the streets. The investigation is now in the hands of U.S. Postal Service authorities in Buffalo, who will determine whether the briefcase was left there by accident or as a prank.

Source: <http://post-journal.com/articles.asp?articleID=20581>

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Agriculture and Food Sector

15. *October 12, Forbes* – (National; International) **USDA: wheat stockpile shrinking fast.** U.S. wheat stockpiles may shrink to the lowest level in 59 years due to robust demand for the grain following two years of weak harvests worldwide, the U.S. Department of Agriculture said Friday in a report. The USDA projects wheat supplies for the 2007-2008 crop year will fall to 307 million bushels, down 55 million bushels from its estimate last month, due to the fast pace of export shipments. Foreign appetite for the country's wheat has surged after poor weather damaged harvests around the world this year. Record high prices have done little to dampen demand. Stockpiles of wheat at the crop year's end would be the lowest since 1949.
Source: <http://www.forbes.com/feeds/ap/2007/10/12/ap4214297.html>
16. *October 12, Reuters* – (National; International) **Lawmakers seek tougher food-safety rules.** House lawmakers questioned U.S. regulators on Thursday as they pressed the Bush administration, after a year marred by public health scares, to come up with more aggressive defenses against dangerous food. Asked why U.S. agencies had not requested authority to recall hazardous food and why U.S. rules did not require verification of other countries' safety measures before they can ship food here, the FDA official in charge of food protection said it would be "crippling" to verify all trade partners' practices were on par with U.S. standards. He defended the agency's record, pointing out legal and budgetary constraints that have posed a challenge for the agency in an increasingly global economy. Law makers are currently considering a number of reforms for import safety.
Source: http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20071011/pl_nm/usa_food_safety_dc;_ylt=AjO3ttjuuX.bIY3p9KqxP1wWIr0F

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Water Sector

17. *October 12, San Francisco Chronicle* – (National) **Pollution pouring into nation's waters far beyond legal limits.** A report released Thursday by U.S. PRIG, a federation of state Public Interest Research Groups, stated that more than half of all industrial and municipal facilities across the country exceeded the amount of sewage and other pollutants they were allowed to dump into the nation's waterways under the Clean Water Act. The report's data came from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Environmentalists said the figures show that industrial plants and municipal wastewater facilities continue to flout the law because of insufficient policing by federal regulators. EPA officials defended the agency's record, saying they had taken enforcement actions resulting in \$8.8 million in fines last year for those caught violating the Clean Water Act. The report's authors said the survey probably underestimates the problem because it looked only at data from major facilities, not smaller sites that also pollute. To see the full report, please visit: <links.sfgate.com/ZBDK>
Source: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2007/10/12/MNIPSOF76.DTL>
18. *October 11, Atlanta Business Chronicle* – (Georgia) **Mayor urges water conservation, proposes rate hike.** The mayor of Atlanta, Georgia has called on residents to conserve water and said she plans to dramatically raise rates on water used for filling swimming pools and irrigating lawns. This comes in the wake of announcements that Lake Lanier, which provides water to Atlanta, is down to just three months of supply. The city of Atlanta has been fixing

thousands of leaks, as well as repairing and replacing pipes, meters and other infrastructure, in an effort to save water. After the drought has ended, the mayor hopes to raise rates on irrigation meters – separate meters installed in some homes that measure outdoor water use only – by as much as 100 percent. Authorities have said Atlanta’s growing population means demand for water will outstrip existing supply over the long term. The mayor has suggested that the region should explore piping additional sources to help meet that long-term need.

Source: <http://www.bizjournals.com/atlanta/stories/2007/10/08/daily29.html>

19. *October 11, The National Academies* – (National) **Increase in ethanol production from corn could significantly harm water quality.** A new report from the National Research Council states that “if projected increases in the use of corn for ethanol production occur, the harm to water quality could be considerable, and water supply problems at the regional and local levels could also arise.” The recent increases in oil prices combined with subsidy policies have led to a dramatic expansion in corn ethanol production, which is expected to continue to grow through the next decade. A National Research Council committee was convened to look at how shifts in the nation’s agriculture to include more energy crops, and potentially more crops overall, could affect water management and long-term sustainability of biofuel production. The report looked at how water quality would be affected both by growing biofuels and by processing them in biorefineries. The authors of the report also examined policy options and identified opportunities for new agricultural techniques and technologies to help minimize effects of biofuel production on water resources.

Source: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/10/071010120538.htm>

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Public Health and Healthcare Sector

20. *October 12, Associated Press* – (National) **J.C. Penny recalls 70,000 items for kids.** More than 90,000 children’s products, most imported by J.C. Penney, were recalled Thursday for containing dangerous levels of lead, a government safety group said. J.C. Penney recalled Chinese-made Winnie the Pooh play sets, decorative ornaments with a horse-theme, and art kits made in Taiwan and Vietnam. Totaling 70,400, the toys imported and sold by J.C. Penney all had excessive levels of lead in their surface paint.

Source: http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/nationworld/2003944185_leadrecall12.html

21. *October 11, The Detroit News* – (National) **Michigan: CDC error fueled measles scare, more tests coming.** A mix-up at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta apparently resulted in officials in Michigan getting erroneous confirmation that an Ann Arbor school girl had measles. A Michigan Department of Community Health spokesman said there was an apparent “transcription error” involving a real measles case in Texas. The Ann Arbor girl does not have measles, but is believed to have contracted an unidentified virus while vacationing in England. A total of nine elementary and pre-school aged children who came in contact with her have symptoms, and officials are still awaiting test results from four of them. The other five tested negative for measles. All of the children had been inoculated against the virus, according to County Health Department officials. Whatever the virus is, authorities do not believe it is life-threatening.

Source:

<http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/artikkel?Dato=20071011&Kategori=UPDATE&Lopenr=710110474&Ref=AR&imw=Y>

22. *October 11, Madison County Journal* – (Mississippi) **Madison County tops state in West Nile cases.** Of the 108 cases of West Nile virus reported in Mississippi this year, 21 have occurred in Madison County. State officials cannot explain why the rate of infection in humans is so much higher there than other counties. Nearby Rankin and Hinds Counties rank a distant second with 11 cases each. There have been three deaths linked to the mosquito-borne virus in the state, one each in Madison, Rankin and Lamar counties.

Source:

<http://www.onlinemadison.com/main.asp?SectionID=1&SubSectionID=1&ArticleID=19334&TM=18062.72>

23. *October 11, Houston Chronicle* – (National) **Lead in lipsticks a concern.** More than half of 33 top-brand lipsticks recently tested contained detectable levels of lead, says a report released Thursday by the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics, a coalition of public health and environmental groups advocating toxin-free products. Also, in 11 of the lipsticks tested, lead levels exceeded 0.1 parts per million. Among the brands found to have high lead levels were L'Oreal, CoverGirl, Christian Dior and Maybelline. An assistant professor of pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine said that the results of the report are “troubling,” but warned against consumer panic since the report is not conclusive and shows different levels of lead for the same brand. A Federal and Drug Administration spokesperson said the agency has no plans to take action in response to the report.

Source: <http://www.chron.com/dispatch/story.mpl/front/5207412.html>

Government Facilities Sector

24. *October 12, The New York Times* – (Pennsylvania) **Boy, 14, seized in plot to open fire at school.** A 14-year-old boy was arrested Wednesday night after the police received a tip that he was plotting a shooting spree at a high school in Plymouth Meeting, a northern suburb of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The police said that the boy had been planning a “Columbine-style” attack on students and, in searching his home, they had found a 9-millimeter assault rifle, dozens of authentic-looking BB and air guns, and seven homemade hand grenades. The boy had attended the middle school associated with the alleged target until 18 months ago, when his parents began schooling him at home because he was being bullied by other students. He tried to recruit another former student at the middle school to join him in the attack and that former student alerted the police. In addition to the weapons found at the boy’s home, the authorities also found notebooks detailing violent acts, an Army handbook on counterinsurgency operations, and a documentary on the Columbine High School shootings. The county district attorney said he did not believe an attack had been imminent, but the boy has been charged with various offenses including criminal attempt and possession of a criminal instrument.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/12/us/12plot.html>

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Emergency Services Sector

25. *October 12, Associated Press* – (National) **FEMA draws up plans for earthquake, hurricane disasters.** The Federal Emergency Management Agency is quietly drawing up plans for a handful of disasters: devastating earthquakes beneath San Francisco and St. Louis and catastrophic storms in South Florida and Hawaii, FEMA's chief said Thursday. In a departure from its traditional expectation that states develop such responses, the agency is forming “base plans” for responding to specific calamities, a FEMA administrator said in an interview Thursday with The Associated Press. FEMA officials expect to finish plans for a massive Bay Area quake by the end of the year and are at work on another response blueprint for a large quake on the New Madrid fault, which runs from southern Illinois to northeastern Arkansas and lurks beneath St. Louis, he said. FEMA also is preparing for a Category 5 hurricane in the Miami area and has nearly completed response guidelines for a failure of the 143-mile dike around Lake Okeechobee, northwest of Miami, he said. About 45,000 people live in flood-prone areas around the lake. Also, the agency recently began assembling response plans for a catastrophic hurricane in Hawaii, he said.
Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,301307,00.html>
26. *October 11, Business Wire* – (National) **Flexpoint’s automotive technology introduced at EMS Expo.** Flexpoint Sensor Systems, Inc. announced in a press release Thursday that Intertek Industrial Corp. will introduce the Protek Passenger Awareness System to the marketplace at the EMS Expo being held this week at the Orlando Convention Center. According to Intertek, the new line of PROTEK Passenger Awareness Systems will utilize the Bend Sensor® as a seat sensing component of the system. This “smart” system provides safety features and operator feedback for the security and protection of EMTs, attendants, and other rear compartment passengers during vehicle operation. Combining safety technology from the automotive industry and incorporating Bend Sensor® Technology into the Protek Passenger Awareness System, Intertek is introducing features and innovation to the Emergency Vehicle industry that have not been available before now, said the release.
Source: <http://biz.yahoo.com/bw/071011/20071011005073.html?.v=1>

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Information Technology

27. *October 12, Computerworld* – (National) **Storm Trojan flaunts crazy cat to build out botnet.** After lying low for several weeks, hackers responsible for spreading the Storm Trojan have returned to the attack with e-mail that leads to an exploit-filled Web site and a laughing cat, said researchers today. Storm -- also known as Nuwar or Peacomm -- is a Trojan horse designed to compromise Windows-powered computers, then add those machines to a growing botnet. Although the size of the botnet Storm has acquired has been disputed, the most conservative estimates put it in the hundreds of thousands. The malware has been seeded using several attack vectors, but the most common have been e-mail campaigns that contain attachments, or which link to malicious Web sites. Those sites then infect visiting vulnerable PCs using drive-by downloads or by convincing users to click on additional links that then download an executable. Attacks typically come in waves, researchers have noted, that rise, crest and then subside, while the hackers behind the botnet have become infamous for crafting

persuasive messages and tricking users into infecting themselves.

Source:

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9042384&intsrc=hm_list

28. *October 11, Computerworld* – (National) **Now Pfizer employees' spouses suffer data compromise.** For the fourth time in as many months, some Pfizer Inc. employees have been affected by a compromise involving personal data -- though this time, in a somewhat indirect fashion and not as a result of a security breach at the company itself. The most recent incident involves Wheels Inc., a company that leases cars to Pfizer employees and their spouses. In August, Wheels discovered that an online Web application used to collect information from spouses of Pfizer employees failed to employ proper encryption during the data transfer process, according to Wheels' marketing director. As a result, personal information sent by about 1,800 spouses of Pfizer employees was transmitted in a non-encrypted fashion to Wheels during a two-week period in August. The data included names, addresses, dates of birth and driver's license numbers. Social Security numbers were not collected as part of the process. Wheels collects the data in order to conduct a search of motor vehicles records to qualify spouses to drive leased company cars, he said. Following the discovery of the breach, Wheels shut down the service and made sure data was being encrypted during transmission before turning the service back on again, he said. Even though the likelihood of anyone's information having actually been intercepted or stolen during transmission is remote, Wheels has decided to offer two-years' worth of credit monitoring and credit restoration services free of charge to the 1,800 people affected, he said.

Source:

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9042298&intsrc=hm_list

29. *October 12, Computerworld* – (National) **Microsoft explains Windows URI patch strategy.** Microsoft Corp. Thursday clarified what it plans to patch to fix a bug in Windows XP and Server 2003, but said it had no plans to overhaul the operating system's protocol-handling technology. Representatives from the Microsoft Security Response Center (MSRC) acknowledged there was confusion around its decision to patch a vulnerability in Windows XP and Windows Server 2003 on systems running Internet Explorer 7. "There are two separate issues," one of the reps said, referring to the Universal Resource Identifier (URI) bug in Windows that was the focus of a security advisory issued yesterday, and a larger problem that first surfaced in June but gained traction in July. "The issue [from] back in June is really related to protocol handling, and is really around how third-party applications handle them," he said. Starting four months ago, researchers uncovered vulnerabilities in applications such as Apple Inc.'s Safari for Windows and Mozilla Corp.'s Firefox that were traced to Windows' protocol handling, the technology that lets browsers run other programs via commands in the URL. In July, criticism mounted as some researchers said Microsoft bore full responsibility for the flaws, which could be used to hijack PCs. Others, however, defended Windows, saying it was the applications' duty to "sanitize" -- to guarantee that the URIs did not allow invalid input -- the URLs they passed to the operating system.

Source:

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9042398&intsrc=hm_list

Internet Alert Dashboard

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at soc@us-cert.gov or visit their Website: www.us-cert.gov.

Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

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Communications Sector

30. *October 11, Reuters* – (National) **FCC eases some broadband rules on AT&T.** A divided Federal Communications Commission (FCC) partially granted AT&T's request to relax rules that govern what the company can charge business customers and rivals for access to some of its high-speed Internet lines. "This relief will enable AT&T to have the flexibility to further deploy its broadband services and fiber facilities without overly burdensome regulations, said the FCC chairman. Under telecommunications law, the FCC has the authority to waive some regulations if it believes the market has become sufficiently competitive. The FCC action will eliminate a key requirement that AT&T file tariffs with the agency disclosing the rates it charges businesses and rivals for high-speed access. The FCC lifted regulations on Verizon Communications high-speed business services last year. Verizon's petition was not approved by the agency, but went into effect when one commissioner recused himself from the case and the remaining four were deadlocked. A similar petition by Qwest Communications International is still pending before the agency. That company's request was put on hold by the FCC last month. All the requests have been opposed by smaller rivals such as Sprint Nextel Corp, Time Warner Telecom Inc and XO Communications.

Source: http://news.zdnet.com/2100-1035_22-6213152.html

31. *October 11, IDG News Service* – (National) **Tech group, broadcasters slug it out on white spaces.** A technology trade group has accused U.S. television executives of conducting a "misinformation campaign" about wireless devices designed to operate in unused portions of the television spectrum. The Information Technology Industry Council (ITI) on Thursday accused executives at four major television networks, including CBS and NBC Universal, of spreading false information about the interference possibilities for proposed devices that would operate in the "white spaces" of the television spectrum. ITI and tech vendors, including Microsoft, Google, Dell, and Philips Electronics North America, are pushing the U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to approve prototype wireless devices that would operate in the white spaces. But in July, a prototype device submitted to the FCC by Microsoft malfunctioned in tests and was not approved by the agency. Microsoft and Philips retested an identical device and said last month that it passed interference sensing tests.

Source: http://www.infoworld.com/article/07/10/11/Tech-group-broadcasters-slug-out-white-spaces_1.html

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Commercial Facilities Sector

32. *October 12, Local6, Orlando* – (Florida) **Bombs may be buried under 54 homes; crew to dig up properties.** Live World War II-era rockets and a grenade were found buried underground this week about 1,000 feet behind Odyssey Middle School and just yards from the Warwick subdivision in Orange County, Florida. Thursday night, families from the subdivision met with Lennar officials to discuss fears that they may be living near or on top of buried explosives. Lennar home builders told the homeowners that a munitions consultant they recently hired identified metal objects on all 54 of their home sites. Lennar's plans to begin digging up properties and may force families from their homes.
Source: <http://www.local6.com/news/14323474/detail.html>

33. *October 12, Seattle P.I.* – (Washington) **Police defuse homemade bombs in Fife.** Bomb squad units used a remote-control robot to defuse two homemade devices Thursday in Fife, Washington, after a police officer discovered them on patrol. The officer discovered the bombs, which were wrapped in heavy tape, around 8:35 a.m. in a largely industrial area near the Puyallup River. "It appears that they were homemade setups, designed not to damage but for show," an official said. He declined to say what type of explosive materials the bombs contained. They were disabled around 11:15 a.m.
Source: http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/335136_bombs12.html

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National Monuments & Icons Sector

34. *October 12, Associated Press* – (Vermont) **Feds: \$1 million worth of pot found growing in National Forest.** Within the past year, the U.S. Forestry Service has uprooted \$1 million worth of marijuana plants in the Green Mountain National Forest. The growers are professional and high-end, according to a special agent, and moving into remote public lands. The investigation into marijuana cultivation in the forest found about 12 operations and nearly 300 plants.
Source: http://www.wcax.com/Global/story.asp?S=7203878&nav=menu183_2

35. *October 11, Philadelphia Business Journal* – (Pennsylvania) **Development ordinance for historic park challenged.** On Thursday, opponents of a proposed development in Valley Forge National Historical Park filed an appeal with the Lower Providence, Pennsylvania, Zoning Hearing Board. The development plans call for a museum, retail and other attractions, which opponents consider "inappropriate commercial development." Last month, a Living History Overlay District was approved and the total development could top 500,000 square feet.
Source: <http://www.bizjournals.com/philadelphia/stories/2007/10/08/daily26.html>

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Dams Sector

36. *October 12, The Times-Picayune* – (New Orleans) **Hands-on oversight for levees proposed.** Federal and state engineers responded immediately to the summons from East Jefferson Levee District Executive Director this week, and less than 36 hours later, an Army Corps of

Engineers team declared the 22 wet spots no threat to floodwall stability. However, the operations committee chairman of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East told the Corps and the state Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) engineers during a meeting this week that he wants to create an inspection squad that answers only to his committee. The team would follow the Corps and DOTD, confer with the original group, and then make an independent assessment for the authority.

Source: <http://www.nola.com/news/t-p/frontpage/index.ssf?/base/news-5/1192172242268980.xml&coll=1>

37. *October 12, Sacramento Business Journal* – (California) **FEMA rejects unrestricted development over Natomas flood fears.** The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) surprised local officials this week when it turned down a request by Sacramento and Sutter Counties, California for a business-as-usual development designation in the Natomas area. Instead of approving the A-99 flood designation for the Natomas area, FEMA recommended the city and counties apply for an AR flood zone, which would essentially halt new development. The AR status would allow infill development for buildings raised 3 feet above grade. It would also require most property owners in the Natomas area to buy flood insurance. FEMA typically allows an A99 designation when flood projects needed to ensure 100-year flood protection are 50 percent constructed or when 60 percent of the funds for the projects have been expended. The city manager said that the city will probably apply for the A99 designation again when the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) has reached that point with its planned levee improvement projects in the area. The city utilities director said FEMA's denial was a change in precedent because the federal agency based its decision on the planned levee improvements instead of the status of the overall flood-control system, including existing levees.

Source: <http://www.bizjournals.com/sacramento/stories/2007/10/08/daily38.html>

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